



Issuance of Retail Nursery Protocol

After a long process to gain acceptance and meaningful content, we have now posted a protocol for eradication of *P. ramorum* when found in retail nurseries. You can view this protocol, named: “**Official Regulatory Protocol for Retail Nurseries Containing Plants Infected with *Phytophthora ramorum***” at http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/pram. This protocol sets the policy for the eradication of *P. ramorum* when detected and confirmed in retail nurseries.

Why a retail eradication protocol?

While we have had a wholesale/production Confirmed Nursery Protocol since 2003, we have not had a set policy on retail establishments. There have been significant inconsistencies in the eradication procedures followed State to State. Considering that the majority of *P. ramorum* detections have historically occurred at retail establishments, the need for a protocol specifically geared for retail nurseries is clear. The retail environment is very different from wholesale/production nursery operations. For instance, plants at retail nurseries originate from many sources, consist of many types, are frequently moved around the premises, and are usually sold quickly. While the phytosanitary risks involved in retail operations are different from wholesale and production nursery operations, we recognize that they are still significant and must be addressed. Most importantly, retailers are the final stop before plants are sold to homeowners and introduced to the environment, which provides *P. ramorum* a significant pathway to spread beyond the nursery environment.

What is different about the retail protocol?

The most marked difference is the destruction of all *P. ramorum* hosts within two meters of infected plants, instead of requiring destruction by blocks. Also unique to this protocol is the placement of a hold on hosts that are within two meters beyond the edge of the destruction area, instead of the ten meter quarantine block as required in the wholesale/production protocol. The retail nursery protocol is similar to the production nursery eradication protocol in that there are additional requirements for retail nurseries found positive more than once. Retailers found positive for *P. ramorum* more than once are a significant concern and they contribute to the perception that the regulations in place for nurseries in California, Oregon and Washington are ineffective. However, the problem may lie with the lack of an effective retail-specific eradication protocol being in place. Additional measures in this protocol include *P. ramorum* mitigations and nursery biosecurity measures.

We have had a very welcome decrease over the past several years in nursery detections. We hope this trend continues and firmly believe implementation of this protocol will add to that success.

Update to our Residential Eradication Protocol

The program has posted an update to the eradication protocol for confirmed detections in residential and commercial landscape plantings. You can view this posting, named: “**Official Regulatory Protocol for *Phytophthora ramorum* Detections in Landscaped Residential or Commercial Settings**” at the same website as all our protocols,

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/pram

The changes were made largely to reflect the change in our website address, but there was one other significant change. We will not require quite so draconian measures for planted trees found in close association with an infected shrub. In the US, we have not observed *P. ramorum* spreading from infected out planting into other nearby hosts, significantly host tree species. Therefore, unless those trees are found infected, they will be subject to monitoring rather than destruction. This, as all policies, are under constant review and may be revised if determined necessary.

Our Thanks to Staff Officer, Valerie DeFeo

The program would like to thank Valerie DeFeo for her hard work and dedication over the past two years as a Staff Officer at APHIS Headquarters Emergency and Domestic Programs. Valerie has been reassigned, but for two years was the point person ably assisting in the daily operation of the *P. ramorum* program. She was very effective at working with the field and stakeholders and in keeping the many protocols up to date. She also authored these public updates, a talent that will be missed. We miss her already and wish her luck in her future assignments and in a long and successful career!